



DINING GUIDE in this issue

The Almanac

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

A Menlo Park kitchen wiz who has friends over 'at the drop of the hat' is featured in the first Home Chef series article.
Cover, Section 2



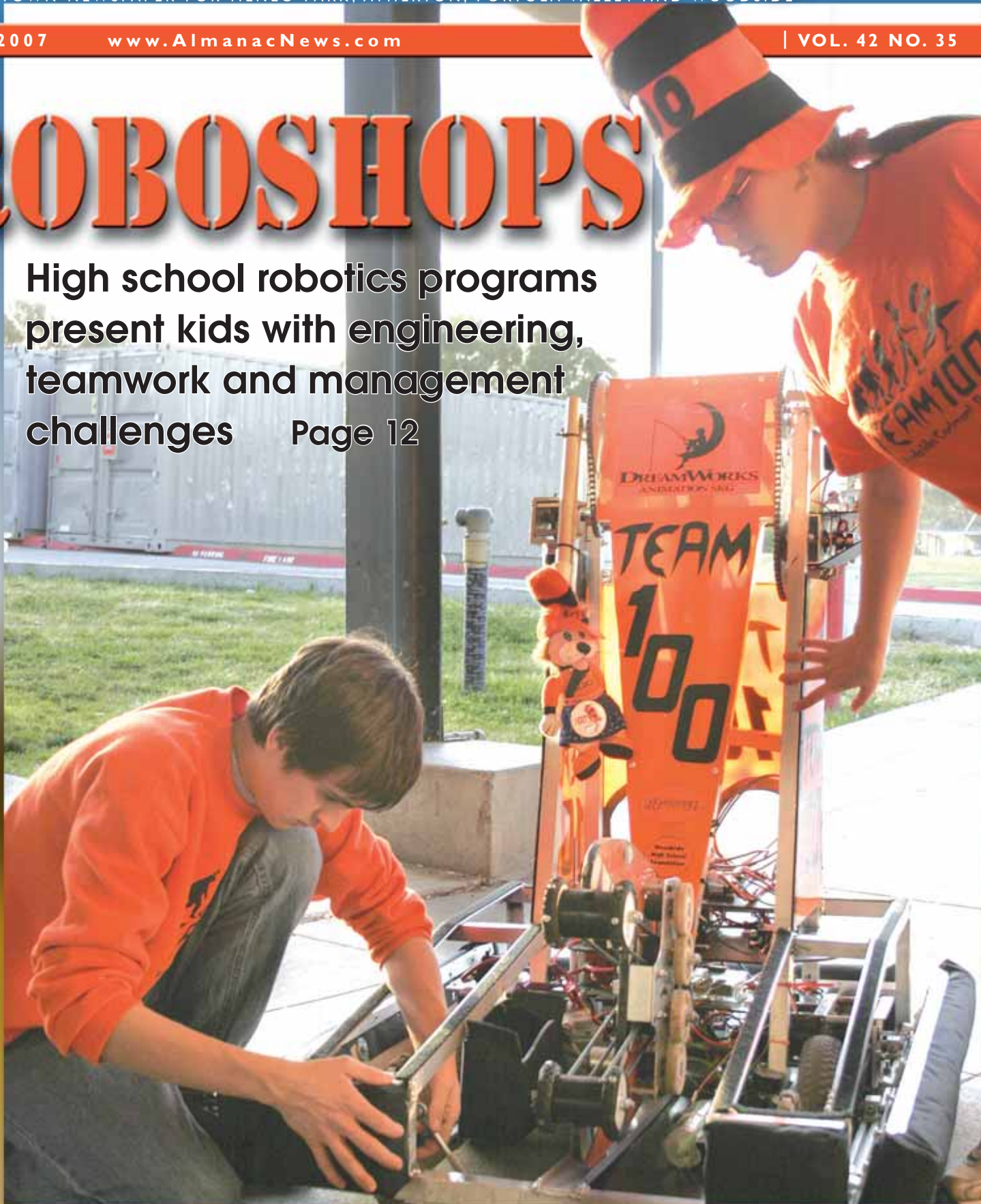
MAY 2, 2007

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| VOL. 42 NO. 35

ROBOSHOPS

High school robotics programs present kids with engineering, teamwork and management challenges Page 12



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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT

A little ground-breaking music, please

After the adults finished the official April 28 groundbreaking ceremony for a new library, Town Hall and community hall at Town Center, Portola Valley kids appropriated the shovels and played in the dirt. About 200 people showed up for an hour of speeches, followed by cake and ice water in the grassy shade of one of the site's two redwood groves.



The Almanac/David Boyce

Menlo Park

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On the cover

Martin Taylor, left, and Haley Valetta, both members of the Woodside/Carlmont high school robotics team, tend to their prize-winning robot Tube-a-Saurus Rex. The remote-controlled robot took first place this spring in contests in San Jose and Sacramento among competing teams from Western states. Photo by Veronica Weber. Story on **Page 12**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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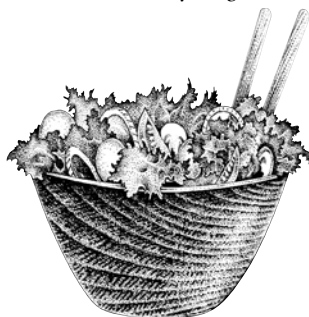
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Amazing Arugula

Springtime means arugula is at its peak, so take advantage during your next meal. This leafy green does especially well in cool weather, which yields tenderness and a mellow flavor. You'll find arugula in many Italian dishes as well as in mesclun salad mixes. Serving as a cross between lettuce and an herb, arugula still grows wild in the Mediterranean and is also known as rocket, roquette, rugula, or rucula. It's wonderful when added to tabouleh and chicken or mixed with white beans and shrimp. Or how about a creamy potato-arugula soup? A few taste-tests will show you just how much arugula to use in recipes to bring out the bold flavor yet not overwhelm the dish.

Vegetables are not only healthy, but can be delicious when you get fresh produce, and prepare it correctly. At **ROBERTS MARKET**, we feature the finest produce, meats, poultry, and seafood available in the area. That means that if you decide to get some arugula you will find the best arugula in the area when you shop with us. We always obtain the highest quality. Our wine department is also the most extensive in the area, more than most liquor stores.

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Notes on a non-scandal

Revelations about another local top cop's bedroom habits came to light last week. Atherton police Chief Bob Brennan was featured on local TV news April 23 when he came out of the closet and admitted that he and his wife sleep in separate bedrooms.

"Everything about Betty and Bob Brennan's two decades of marriage seemed perfect until the lights went out. She's an insomniac, while he is a light sleeper who snores," said a CBS News story about couples that sleep apart in order to keep the marriage together.

City? This ain't no stinkin' city!

Much to the happiness of at least one Woodside resident, the city limits signs on Interstate 280 have been replaced by Caltrans. Next time you zoom into Woodside, check out the snazzy Woodside town limits signs.

Kite Day do-over

No one can accuse Menlo Park of running a slick PR machine. After the annual Kite Day at Bayfront Park on April 22 was belatedly canceled, due to the previous night's rain, notices for the rescheduled "Kite Day 2.0" were sent out. They were followed in short order by another e-mail dispatch for "Kite Day 3.0" correcting the make-up date from May 29 to April 29.

Who's gonna patronize a little bitty two-by-four kinda store anymore?

The old Woodside store at Kings Mountain and Tripp roads is open for business, of sorts, on Sunday, May 6, from noon to 4 p.m. The San Mateo County Historical Association is hosting family activities at the historic store. The free event includes horse-drawn wagon rides, ice-cream churning, pie eating and rag doll making. Call 299-0104.

The Almanac embraces talkies

Our Web page, Almanac-News.com, is featuring our first slideshow with sound by staff photographer Veronica Weber. Local rugby players are the stars of the show.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Schwab trail offer wins over equestrians

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

A showdown between skitish equestrians and Woodside officials over a key segment of the town's trail system had a happy ending.

Horse riders, afraid the town was giving up rights to a stretch of equestrian trail that links northern and southern Woodside and provides access to Wunderlich and Huddart county parks, say they're pleased with an agreement negotiated between the town and property owners Charles and Helen Schwab.

WOODSIDE

"I think the agreement on the horse trail is a good agreement," said Malcolm MacNaughton at the April 24 Town Council meeting.

Last month, the equestrian community was up in arms, sending e-mails and packing Independence Hall over the potential loss of the trail through two adjoining parcels owned by the Schwabs.

Town Council members tried to ease their fears by alluding to negotiations between Town Attorney Jean Savaree and the Schwabs' attorney, John Hanna, but due to

open meeting law rules, they could not discuss the details. So, they postponed the debate to last week's meeting, and dubious horse owners, with trail agreement in hand, were appeased.

"I think we as horse people tend to get a bit paranoid," said Fentress Hall, who offered an apology for the equestrian community's initial misgivings. "I'd like to thank the Schwabs for hanging in there while the community expresses our collective anxiety."

The innovative agreement guarantees equestrian access on the trail through the Schwabs' Woodside Road property, much as a

dedicated trail easement would. The only real difference is that the Schwabs avoid having an easement cloud the titles of their combined 23-acres of property. Ms. Savaree said that the agreement is every bit as binding as an easement.

Current and future owners of the property will have to abide by the agreement, which specifies that the trail may only be closed for limited times, in cases of construction, bad weather or security issues, with 24-hour notice given to the town. To access it, riders

See **SCHWAB**, page 8

High court won't hear Jobs appeal

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The California Supreme Court does not want to hear about Steve Jobs' quest to tear down a historic Woodside mansion. On April 25, the state's High Court turned down Mr. Jobs' petition to hear his case.

Mr. Jobs, the CEO of Apple Inc., has been waging a losing battle against a group of preservationists over the fate of the Jackling house, a massive Spanish Colonial revival-style mansion built in 1926.

He said he plans to tear it down and build a new family home on the Mountain Home Road site, but has been thwarted by an ad-hoc

See **JOBS**, page 8



The urgency is staged, as is the "blood" on the face of Menlo School junior Anne Hawkins of Atherton, but the message to drive safely is real enough during this mock accident designed to bring home to new drivers the consequences of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The drama, held April 26 on the campus of Menlo College in Atherton, includes DUI arrests and a "funeral."

Tripp Robbins

Fire district calls for mandatory sprinklers in Menlo Park

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman will likely reignite the debate whether fire sprinklers should be required in Menlo Park homes when he pleads his case to the City Council on May 1.

Mr. Schapelhouman, on behalf of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, is scheduled to ask the council to adopt an ordinance that would require sprinkler systems in new single-family homes of more than 1,000 square feet; in homes where more than 50 percent of the structure has been remodeled; and all planned buildings with a basement of more than 250 square feet.

The ordinance would not apply to exist-

ing homes, unless they underwent a major remodel.

Mr. Schapelhouman's presentation is scheduled at the start of the council meeting at 7 p.m. in the council chambers in the Civic Center.

Council members are not scheduled to act on the fire sprinkler request, but they could choose to discuss the issue at a future meeting.

Although similar ordinances have been adopted by councils in East Palo Alto and Atherton — cities also in the Menlo Park Fire Protection District — the issue has been divisive in Menlo Park.

Fire district officials and other sprinkler proponents say that requiring sprinklers

would increase safety for residents and firefighters, but opponents of the ordinance have argued that the cost of installing sprinklers and the potential water damage they cause may outweigh the safety benefits.

Mayor Kelly Fergusson, who pushed for further discussion of an ordinance in 2005, said she's looking forward to Mr. Schapelhouman's presentation. "I'm interested in hearing about making it safer for firefighters to fight fires in a residential setting," Mayor Kelly Fergusson said.

In 2004, council members Lee Duboc, Nicholas Jellins and Mickie Winkler voted against the ordinance. Although the issue resurfaced in 2005, the council never voted on it. ■



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Video blogger travels the world

Woodside's Bill Bowles uses satellite feeds to post video reports on the Web

By Kate Daly

Special to the Almanac

Bound for Madagascar and armed with a portable video camera, tripod, laptop computer, satellite modem and small solar panels, Bill Bowles of Woodside is ready for action anywhere, and hoping to share it with everyone around the world.

In February the 27-year-old took off on a global adventure and telling the world about it through frequent, short video reports on his Web site, mynameisbill.com.

So far, he has crossed the Atlantic on a freighter from Philadelphia to London, and roamed around France, as detailed in more than 30 approximately two-minute long videos.

After attending Woodside Elementary and Woodside High schools, Mr. Bowles studied film at Hampshire College. He works in the film industry when he isn't acting, most recently for the cabaret theater, Rococo Risque in San Francisco.

He says he was inspired in part by reality TV and the popularity of podcasting, and wanted to get in on the trend and try his hand at being an independent reporter/filmmaker.

His father, Mark, helped get him launched by designing the Web site, which Mr. Bowles initially publicized with an "e-mail blast to 300 friends."

Mr. Bowles' younger brother, Ben, also pitched in by devising a piece of equipment to keep the receiver balanced during satellite feeds.

Every once in awhile Mr. Bowles enlists a friend to hold the camera during shooting, but usually he is on his own, carrying around 25 pounds of gear in a backpack, poised to tape, edit, and share snippets of "my extraordinary travel adventures."

"My main goal is to meet people and meet more people," he says, through "global connectivity."

He is hoping to find free lodging most of the time by using a network he found on Couchsurfing.com, where overnight stays are offered all over the world.

Mr. Bowles also sees his Web site enabling him to "take recommendations" from strangers that could lead him to even

Bill Bowles of Woodside in one of his online video blogs from the Tower Bridge in London.



more places and people. He has already received invites from folks in Denmark, Poland, Ethiopia and Jordan to come visit. Originally, he planned to go to Johannesburg, Hong Kong and Siberia, but that could shift.

He says he spent about \$1,000 to outfit himself with an Inmarstat satellite modem that he can point at one of the company's two satellites circling the world, and make digital feeds to his Web site in five minutes. He pays \$400 per month for basic service that provides him with 100 megabytes per month.

Mr. Bowles estimates he has built up an audience of about 200 viewers per day, but points out "there are so many aggregator sites that spread video blogs all over the place, that I'm unsure what the top number is."

He knows a high school media studies class in Santa Cruz and another one in Minnesota watch him regularly.

Mr. Bowles also links his episodes to Revver.com, a video-sharing site, which he says works somewhat like Youtube.com, except that "they pay the content creators and the distributors."

He expects to make some money this way, as he has in the past with his short video, "Cardboard Box Race." He estimates about 60,000 people have clicked on that video so far, because he has earned over \$400 from it on Revver.com.

Mr. Bowles is both idealistic and realistic about his future travels. He has grand plans, but says if in six months "only 800 people watch and I burn through \$6,000, then I'll come home." **A**

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Some Facts About "As-Is" Sales

Q: I am in contract to sell my house and the property is being sold "as-is" with no contingencies. The buyer wants to do some further inspections and I have just found out that a tree in my yard is causing damage to my neighbor's driveway. What are my obligations with respect to these issues?

A: Even though the buyer of your house has made a non-contingent, "as-is" offer, he retains the right to further inspect the property in keeping with the guidelines of the contract. No government inspectors may be brought to the property without the written consent of the seller, but buyers may initiate roof, chimney, and other inspections, not as a contingency

of the contract, but simply for further information. You must allow them reasonable access to do this. If the inspections turn up significant problems or defects, unknown at the time the contract was accepted, you the seller must issue a supplemental Transfer Disclosure Statement disclosing this new information. This new disclosure would allow the buyer a three-day right of rescission.

Regarding removal of the tree that is impacting your neighbor's driveway, this is your responsibility since it was not known at the time the contract was accepted. You should confirm with the buyer that he agrees to have you remove the tree and then you should pay for it.

For answers to any questions you may have on real estate, you may e-mail me at mcorman@apr.com or call 462-1111, Alain Pinel Realtors. I also offer a free market analysis of your property.

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Sheriff, undersheriff won't discuss Las Vegas detainment at brothel

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Just about everyone has something to say regarding what San Mateo County Sheriff Greg Munks and Undersheriff Carlos Bolanos were doing in a Las Vegas brothel that was raided by police.

Everyone, that is, except for the two officers themselves.

Mr. Munks and Mr. Bolanos were detained and questioned by Las Vegas police on April 21, when they were found on the premises of a brothel, spurring a media frenzy about the county's two top officers.

The brothel was operating out of an unmarked house located in a residential neighborhood, about three miles off the main strip of hotels and casinos, said Martin Wright, a public information officer with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

"We interviewed [Mr. Munks and Mr. Bolanos], and they were forthright and honest about who they were and what they were there to do," Mr. Wright said.

Sheriff Munks and Undersheriff Bolanos have said — through brief statements — they thought the building was home to a massage parlor, but Mr. Wright would not disclose if that's what the officers said when detained.

Mr. Munks issued a statement on April 24 in which he apologized for the "undue attention and embarrassment" brought about by the incident, but said he "believed [he] was going into a legitimate busi-

ness."

Mr. Bolanos told KLAS-TV, a Las Vegas television station, that Mr. Munks was sore after a law enforcement run he took part in earlier that day, and the two officers told a limo driver to take them to a massage parlor.

Both officers denied interview requests by the Almanac, and have declined to further discuss the incident publicly, prompting some members of the public to call for more information about their detainment.

During the raid, which resulted in the arrest of seven people, but no customers, officers found 3,500 tabs of ecstasy and \$20,000 in cash. There is an ongoing investigation to determine whether the prostitutes at the brothel were working as sex slaves, Mr. Wright said.

Mr. Wright said there are no plans to file charges against the officers. He said the raid was one of several brothel busts orchestrated by local law enforcement and the FBI to catch major players in the local prostitution ring — an effort labeled "Operation Dollhouse."

He noted prostitution is illegal in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas.

Deputies' support

Although questions still



Greg Munks

remain about the officers' Las Vegas trip, the San Mateo County Deputy Sheriff's Association has issued a statement in support of the two top cops.

"While the Deputy Sheriff's Association certainly does not always agree with Sheriff Munks and Undersheriff Bolanos' decisions, we have found both to be proven and effective leaders," says the statement, signed by the association's executive board members. "We remain confident in their abilities and leadership and we look forward to moving past this incident."

Spending report

County Manager John Maltbie has requested that the county controller's office examine any expenses related to the officers' Las Vegas trip.

Deputy Controller Kancahn Charan said an expense report could be released as early as Friday, May 4.

County Supervisor Rich Gordon said he's looking forward to the results of the controller's audit, but said he's not seeking more details about the officers' detainment at this time.

He said he's received about 15 e-mails from residents about the issue, and all of them have been "very negative" regarding Sheriff Munks.

Mr. Munks, a resident of Portola Valley, was elected without opposition last June and took office in January. ■



Veronica Weber

Woodside Fire Cadet Billy Tognozzi helps Portola Valley resident Michelle Green exit out the simulated smoke-filled fire safety trailer at Canada College on Saturday, April 28, 2007.

Downtown jeweler to close shop

Marilyn Fidge is trading gold for grapes. The owner of the popular downtown Menlo Park jewelry shop, Timothy Fidge & Co., is retiring in order to spend more time in her family's winery in Napa.

The shop, which features an on-site workshop and employs five full-time and three part-time jewelry designers, will close its doors by the end of July at the latest, Ms. Fidge told the Almanac. It will depend on how quickly the shop sells off its stock, she said. The store's public sale begins May 9.

"The lease is up July 31, but we could be here cranking out our last custom goods until the last minute," she said.

Timothy Fidge & Co., founded

by Ms. Fidge's husband, moved in 1999 from Town & Country Village in Palo Alto to its location at 642 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park.

Mr. Fidge, who learned jewelry-making while stationed at a U.S. Air Force installation in Alaska in the 1960s, died in a small plane crash in 1989.

Her father, whose retirement hobby was growing grapes, started Tudal winery in St. Helena, she said.

Ms. Fidge said she has been spending a lot of time at the family winery since her father passed away last year.

"It's time for a change," she said. "It's like I've had two jobs at once."

SCHWAB

continued from page 5

must be key-holding Woodside Trail Club members.

Council members said the agreement is the first of its kind and could serve as a model for securing rights to horse trails in the future.

"In the best of all possible worlds, I'd hoped for a dedicated easement, but under the circumstances, we acquired a most acceptable agreement," said Councilwoman Carroll Ann Hodges.

After listening to conciliatory comments from the handful of equestrians who spoke, and receiving thanks from all seven council members, Mr. Hanna said he was sorry that the Schwabs were not at the meeting to hear what everyone was saying.

"Helen (Schwab) is not here because she almost became physically ill after sitting through the last two meetings," he said.

The key to the deal was that

the trail agreement would not be recorded with the property deeds. Mr. Hanna threatened to rescind the offer when council members pressed to have the agreement notarized and recorded.

"We're coming forward and offering a trail, it's a good deal for the town, for equestrians," he said. "We don't have to record it, we don't want to record it, and we're not going to record it."

In a related matter, the Schwabs were allowed to redraw the dividing line between the two Woodside Road properties to make the smaller one conform to the neighborhood's minimum size of 5 acres. On a 6-0 vote, the council denied an appeal by resident Eldona Hamel and upheld the Planning Commission's approval of the lot-line adjustment.

Equestrians had been pressing the council to use the lot-line adjustment as leverage to gain a dedicated trail easement, but Town Attorney Savaree said such a trade-off would not be legally defensible. ■

JOBS

continued from page 5

preservation group called Uphold Our Heritage that filed suit to block the demolition

Mr. Jobs was granted a demolition permit by the town of Woodside in December 2004.

Uphold Our Heritage, led by Miami Beach resident Clotilde Luce, whose family owned the Jackling house in the 1960s, successfully halted the demolition, wining its case in both the trial court and appeals court.

Ms. Luce called yesterday's state Supreme Court's decision good news for preservationists.

Howard Ellman, Mr. Jobs' attorney, could not be immediately reached for comment.

The town of Woodside has no rules of its own regarding historic structures, so the fate of the Jackling house is governed by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In order to justify granting Mr. Jobs a demolition permit, town officials needed to show proof

that there were no feasible alternatives to tearing the house down. According to a trial court judge, and the state Court of Appeal, Woodside officials failed to show such proof.

Mr. Jobs has said that he plans to build a much smaller family home on the site, and referred to the Jackling house, where he lived for 10

years, as an architectural "abomination." In recent years, the Jackling house has been uninhabited and allowed to fall into disrepair.

The demolition permit for the Jackling house came with an unusual condition — that Mr. Jobs offer to give away the mansion to someone who would relocate it and restore it. ■

Neighbors more receptive to new Oak Knoll School plan

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Apparently the plans to renovate Oak Knoll School in Menlo Park aren't as detrimental as neighbors initially thought.

About 200 people — many of them neighbors of the school — attended the April 25 Menlo Park City School District board meeting, where district officials presented a new plan for renovating the K-5 campus.

The school board isn't scheduled to choose a final design until its May 16 meeting, but all board members supported building a two-story multi-purpose building at the north end of the school, and a large playing field on the southern portion of the campus.

Construction is scheduled for June 2008 to December 2010, said Ahmad Sheikholeslami, the district's facility planner. The renovations will cost about \$11.7 million, and will be funded by the \$91 million school bond measure that was approved by voters last June.

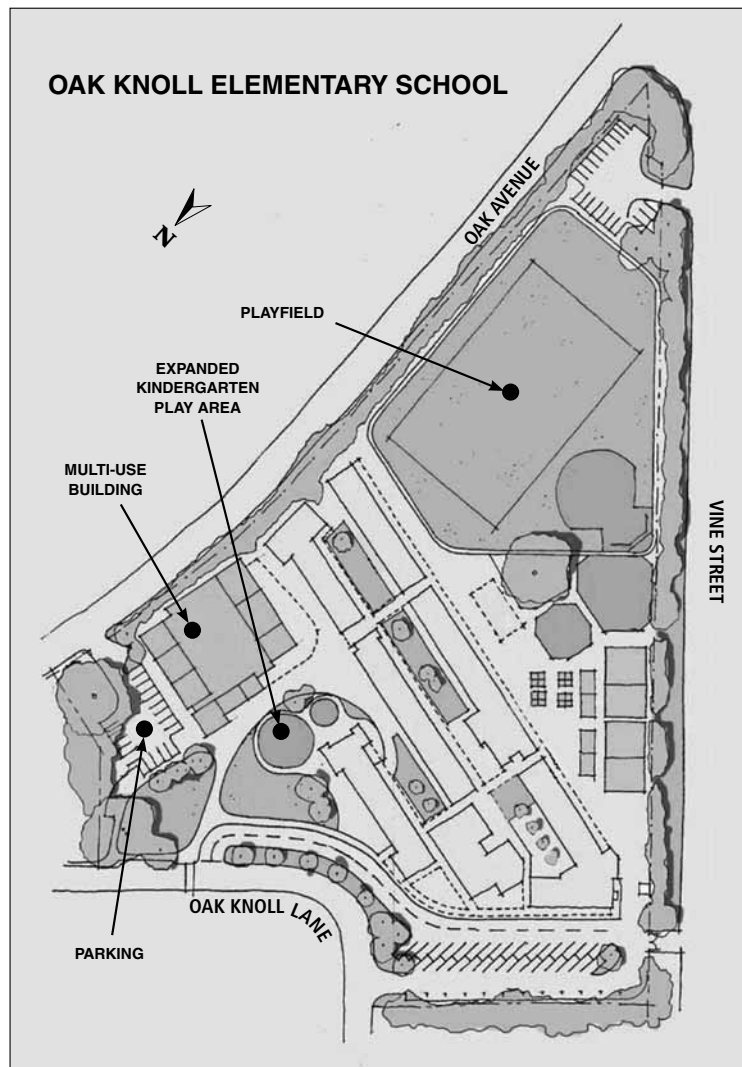
The 8.9-acre triangular campus is bordered by Oak Knoll Lane, Oak Avenue and Vine Street, and neighbors of all three streets and the surrounding area — whether their unease focused on the loss of field space, the size of the proposed multi-use building, or increased traffic — expressed major concerns regarding the renovation when initial plans were presented March 19.

Although some neighbors said they still had some concerns, most people applauded efforts by the district to add playground space for kindergarteners, surround a new parking lot with foliage, and minimize traffic impacts.

"I think [district officials] have done an excellent job listening to neighbors," said Ann Stoner, who has two children at Oak Knoll, and lives about a half mile from the school. "Let's not waste any more of our money and our time — we need to move forward."

Residents of Vine Street, most of which live in unincorporated Menlo Park and whose children are not in the Menlo Park City School District, stressed the need to keep traffic off their street, but recognized the district's efforts to accommodate children.

"I'm cautiously optimistic," said Vine Street resident Gari Merendino, after the meeting. "The plans the district is looking at seem to work pretty well, but



Schematic site plan/Deems Lewis McKinley

This new plan for renovating Oak Knoll School was presented to members of the Menlo Park City School District Board of Education on April 25. Board members, as well as many members of the public, were receptive to the plan, as it provides a large playing field and increased parking off Vine Street, and foliage between homes and the parking lot near the multi-use building.

we're not letting our guard down just yet."

Board reaction

After the initial plans were slammed by neighbors in March, school board members were relieved to hear that some of the concerns have subsided.

"We got some heat at the last meeting, but at the end of the day it makes us better," said Deborah Fitz.

Board President Terry Thygesen said the meeting was "very productive" and the new revised site plans are good from a "safety, security and supervision standpoint."

The new multi-use building includes plans for a science lab, art lab, stage, gym, kitchen, and music rooms. The proposed building would be 16,000 square feet on the ground floor, with classrooms on the second floor, Mr. Sheikholeslami said.

Board members Fitz, Thygesen, Jeff Child and Laura Rich

avored building an 81,000-square-foot playing field on the southern portion of the campus, but Bruce Ives said the district should consider building a 72,000-square-foot playing field, and maintaining more field space on the northern end of the school.

Final board decisions on the field space layout and other issues are scheduled for the May 16 meeting. ■

No gun found on local student

Atherton police reported a student living in Menlo Park was "driving around" Menlo-Atherton High School on Friday, April 20, claiming to have a gun with which he planned "to do harm to himself," police said. No weapon was found. The student's parents told police that the student was on medication and under a doctor's care, police said.

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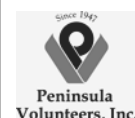
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Police interview witnesses in David Halberstam crash

Menlo Park police are interviewing four witnesses in conjunction with the three-car accident that killed Pulitzer prize-winning author David Halberstam on April 23.

Mr. Halberstam, 73, of New York, was en route from the East Bay to meet with Atherton resident and NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Y.A. Tittle at his Mountain View insurance company office. He was fatally injured when the car he was traveling in was broadsided as it turned left from Bayfront Expressway onto Willow Road. The two cars then crashed into a third car, police said.

Investigators are trying to determine whether one of the

two drivers in the initial collision ran a red light, said Menlo Park Police Department spokeswoman Nicole Acker.

"No one wants to be at fault," Ms. Acker said. "That's why it's so important that these witnesses came forward."

Mr. Halberstam was a passenger in a car driven by Kevin Jones, 26, a journalism student at the University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Halberstam had given a lecture at an alumni conference over the weekend, said a UC Berkeley spokeswoman.

Mr. Jones told the Associated Press last week that he wanted to apologize to Mr. Halberstam's family, because he felt so bad about the accident.

Mr. Halberstam died almost instantly when a broken rib punctured his heart, according to Robert Foucrault, the San Mateo County coroner. The force of the collision caused a two-foot indentation on Mr. Halberstam's side of the car, said Chief Harold Schapelhouman of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

Mr. Halberstam was in the Bay Area working on a book about the 1958 NFL championship game between the Baltimore Colts and the New York Giants, according to the Associated Press. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1964 for his reporting on the Vietnam War for the New York Times.

New principal chosen for Ormondale School

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Jennifer Warren, who is completing a dissertation for a doctor of education degree from the University of Pennsylvania, will take over as principal of Ormondale School in Portola Valley when Eva Gal retires from the K-3 school at the end of June.

The trustees of the Portola Valley School District unanimously chose Ms. Warren from a field of four finalists at an April 25 meeting, district Superintendent Anne Campbell told the Almanac in an e-mail.

Ms. Warren's doctorate from Penn would follow a magna cum laude bachelor's degree from the University of the Pacific in Stockton and a summa cum laude

master's degree from National University in San Diego.

"Jennifer received outstanding recommendations from educators throughout the United States and she brings a wide range of experiences with her to Ormondale," Ms. Campbell said. "We're delighted she has chosen to come to roost in Portola Valley!"

Ms. Warren's teaching career includes two K-5 schools in Escondido: as a second-, third- and fourth- grade teacher at Conway Elementary School and as assistant principal at L.R. Green School, Ms. Campbell said.

She has also worked as a coordinator for the Teach for America project, which encourages "top college students" to take up teaching, and she taught in the graduate school of education at Penn, Ms. Campbell said.

Ms. Warren has interests in photography and hiking and lives in Redwood Shores with her husband. ■



Jennifer Warren

Train strikes unoccupied car at Encinal Avenue

Menlo Park police have charged Otoniel Cortez, 29, of Newark with misdemeanor drunken driving after a northbound local passenger train struck his unoccupied Volkswagen Jetta where the tracks cross Encinal Avenue at

about 8:50 p.m. Friday, April 27.

Mr. Cortez appeared to have gotten his car stuck while attempting a left turn as he crossed the tracks, said Menlo Park Police Department spokeswoman Nicole Acker. He tried

unsuccessfully to push the car to safety, she added.

The red-and-white crossing arms were apparently not down when he crossed the tracks, she said.

Police arrested Mr. Cortez and

took him to the First Chance alcohol treatment center in Belmont based on breath analysis and field sobriety tests, Ms. Acker said.

No injuries were reported. Train service restarted after about an hour, said Caltrain spokesman Jonah Weinberg.

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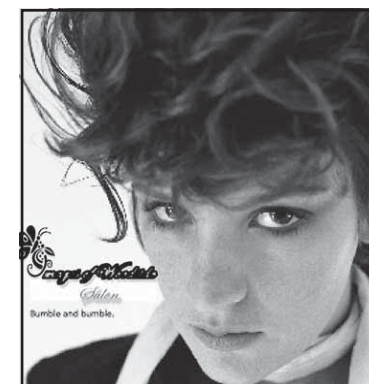
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ROBOSHOPS



Robot 766, under the remote control of students from Menlo-Atherton High School, may be trying to gain bonus points here by driving up on to the lifting ramp of teammate 624 during competition at a western-states regional robotics contest held in San Jose this spring.

Robotics program presents kids with engineering and teamwork challenges

Cover Story by Dave Boyce • Photos by Veronica Weber

If our cave-dwelling ancestors had had the time and imagination for games, ring toss might have been a natural. A few circles fashioned from flexible branches, a stick pounded into the ground and it's party time.

In any case, ring toss is still with us. It's still a simple game, but complexities may be added for more enjoyment. Try this: Build a robot that can run around and play a ring-toss-like game against other robots. Do it in six weeks.

There are rules. You buy a set of generic parts such as motors and relays. Other parts must be manufactured or scrounged. Industrial partners can help, if you can find them. The robot can weigh no more than 120 pounds and be no taller than four feet.

You will need skills in mechanics, electronics, mathematics, software programming, 3D-animation, critical and abstract thinking, thinking on your feet, and, very important, managing and working within a group. You will need a team and probably some mentors to get this done on time.

Plan on finding donors for the \$30,000 or more you'll need to pay for parts, extra software, travel and fees to enter the contests and ship your robot from arena to

arena. The fee for the parts kit and two contest registrations is \$10,000. The final in Atlanta is another \$5,000 entry fee.

If ring toss is too daunting or if you've finished your robot and have time left-

over, you can equip it with a lifting ramp that allies can drive onto. A lift is worth bonus points if the robot is at least a foot off the ground.

For the contests, you'll need to brush up on

joy-stick skills and bring your game face.

In a match-play contest, two teams of three remotely operated, randomly assigned robots mix it up in an enclosed arena. Teams must figure out their own and their opponents' strengths and weaknesses, then work their robots cooperatively to place 2-foot-diameter inner-tubes on horizontal poles while interrupting the other team's efforts to do the same thing.

During finals games, the teams of three are formed intentionally and stay together until a winning team emerges.

Such was the task set for high school teams around the United States and in seven other countries this year by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), the Manchester, New Hampshire-based nonprofit that runs the competitions and devises a new challenge each year.

Among local high school teams participating this year were Menlo-Atherton, a combined team from Woodside and Carlmont (in Belmont), East Palo Alto High School in Menlo Park, Sacred Heart Preparatory in Atherton, and Woodside Priory in Portola Valley.



Menlo-Atherton High School sophomore Nick Felt, center, tests the M-A robot's ability to extend its claw-arm and grasp a plastic inner-tube. A robotic game of ring toss using such inner-tubes was the principal challenge at annual high school robot competitions this year.

A civilized debate

For M-A junior Alp Kutlu, the co-presi-



Daniel Bathgate, center, a member of the robotics team at Sacred Heart Prep in Atherton, celebrates the referee's decision and the performance of the school's robot in the annual high-school robot games in San Jose. **Below**, a rendering of Woodside High School's Tube-a-Saurus Rex, the top scorer in the San Jose and Sacramento games. Teams from throughout the West participated.

from an ignored thing to the equivalent of a major sport at the school," he says. "It's a great program."

Universities appear to agree. For 2007, the FIRST Web site lists scholarships totaling just over \$2 million for 102 students. A total of \$8 million in scholarships is available from 436 institutions, said John Marchiony, FIRST's chief marketing officer.

"I wish I had had these opportunities. It would have opened doors," says Andy Jones, a mentor for the M-A team and a senior engineer with financial sponsor Abbott Vascular, a medical research and device manufacturing firm based in San Jose.



dent of the school's robotics team, the first impression of the challenge is: "This is something impossible. You can't really accomplish this."

Alp's first impression never lasts, he says. An interior mentor takes over, a voice that says: "You know, I'm going to keep going with this."

He's in his fourth year in robotics, having gotten an early start with an eighth-grade invitation to an off-season competition. Alp and co-president Jamey Gump ran the robot brainstorming/design meetings this year and coordinated the fabrication. The team and many parents did the fundraising.

"This is something that I really like doing, something that really interests me," Alp says. "It's a really friendly environment. People really recognize the fact that people have all kinds of ideas."

Students make the decisions. It's the job of adult mentors with practical experience to raise critical questions. "They're key," Jamey says. "They're the people who teach us how to (refine) stuff so we can compete."

"Basically, at the end of two weeks of debate, we had narrowed it down to a (robotic) arm design," Alp says. In short, they focused on a machine that could handle the inner-tubes. The lift-ramp idea was set aside.

"The whole team had to decide on one design because we couldn't build six," Jamey says.

Had anyone quit? No, Alp says. Did design arguments devolve into fights? Simply not liking an idea was unacceptable, he says. You had to explain why you didn't like it. "We had a formal civilized debate."

In a workshop in M-A's Building S on a recent Saturday afternoon, enthusiasm permeated the room. "It's fun," says teammate Nick Felt. "We have a lot of great people working on the team. We see what we can build together and go to a competition."

In two regional contests this spring

involving schools from around the West, M-A made the finals in San Jose with 48 teams competing. In Sacramento, they finished 14th out of 39 teams.

A sport for nerds

On the Woodside/Carlmont team, consensus did not come easily.

"It takes a tremendous amount of effort because it's such a complex machine," says team captain Andrew Thiess. The rules "constrain you" with tight dimensions and deadlines. "There are lots of ways to solve those problems, but they all have costs and benefits," he says.

The team debated whether their robot should focus on the inner-tube skill or the lifting-ramp skill, he says. "We had a huge battle ... over whether we wanted to try to do one them very well or do both sort of well."

Like M-A's team, they settled on an arm with a claw on the end to manipulate the inner-tubes. And they did well.

Tube-a-Saurus Rex — as the six-wheeled, one-armed contender is known — finished first in both the San Jose and Sacramento regionals, which earned them the right to go to the nationals.

"It's basically sports for nerds," Andrew says. "The founders (of FIRST) are really trying to give technology and science the same recognition that sports has ... You have to work as a team and it takes everybody's participation to get the right outcome."

Winning is great and Woodside/Carlmont had a great year, but "the right outcome," Andrew says, is "making sure everybody has the technical knowledge and experience in life to get them started toward a career in

science and technology."

Woodside sophomore Steve Rhodes fits that description. "I'm about completely positive I'll want to do something with engineering" in college, he says. "Through all of this, I've found that it's really enjoyable, the fact that, with your own hands, you're able to make something that does stuff ... and wins."

Rock stars

FIRST robotics competitions are not for wallflowers. Arenas fill with thousands of spectators, big-screen TVs capture the action, and rock music pounds from the sound system.

In the past, kids drawn to science and technology would retreat to their homes to solder a radio kit and read Popular Mechanics magazine, said chemist Bob Dubrow, the father of Carlmont High sophomore Geoff Dubrow.

Those days are gone, Mr. Dubrow says. Today, "you're working on a team. There's a whole lot of kids (and) mentors. You're on center stage. Engineering goes

Asked for a memorable moment this year, Mr. Jones recalled an M-A student new to welding. "Welding is not as easy as it looks," Mr. Jones says. "We had one student and he had a knack. He knew exactly what to do."

"One of the really cool things (is that) engineering, in the past, was kind of a boys' club," he adds. "A really gratifying thing was the young girls and women looking into this. It was really inspiring."

The Woodside/Carlmont team had five young women out of 22 members, a parent told the Almanac. At M-A, there were seven out of 25, said team co-president Jamey Gump.

See **ROBOT**, page 21

Tamara Hassoon, foreground, and **Vera Czernichowska** — both Menlo-Atherton High School sophomores and members of the school's robotics program — tune up their robot's remote controller on a recent Saturday afternoon in Building S.



Menlo Park mayor to give 'State of the City' address

Menlo Park residents who like annual speeches from elected officials are in luck: This year, the city will introduce a "State of the City" address, tentatively scheduled for June 5. This year's mayor, Kelly Fergusson, will deliver the address.

The City Council on April 24 voted unanimously to endorse the event.

The address is intended to give the mayor a chance to outline his or her views and goals regarding Menlo Park, said Interim City Manager Kent Steffens. Cities such as Palo Alto and Redwood City hold similar events.

The address will be followed by a reception. The location and time have yet to be determined.

Council may pick city manager by June

If all goes according to plan, the Menlo Park City Council will pick a new city manager by mid June.

A council subcommittee of John Boyle and Andy Cohen, and city staff are recommending the council adopt a timeline to interview candidates and choose a city manager.

The council will consider the timeline at its May 1 meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

According to the proposed timeline, a previously hired consultant will select up to eight candidates to be interviewed by

■ MENLO PARK

the council on June 1.

Two or three of those candidates would be chosen as finalists, and would go before panels of city staff, union representatives and community members the week of June 11.

Council members would listen to input from members of the panels, and then pick the new city manager.

The previous city manager, David Boesch, left the city in February to become San Mateo County's assistant county manager.

Public invited to talk about budget

Menlo Park city staff and public officials will be available to talk about the budget at informal, drop-in meetings on Thursday, May 3, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Belle Haven Senior Center at 100 Terminal Ave., and Saturday, May 5, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Burgess Recreation Center at 700 Alma St.

Attendees will also be asked to vote for their favorite photograph among those submitted in a contest; the winning photo will be used on the front cover of the 2007-08 fiscal year budget report, and the winner will receive a \$150 gift certificate from Kepler's.

For more information about the photo contest, go to MenloPark.org and click on "City of Menlo Park photo contest."

Surge in sudden oak death comes to Portola Valley, Woodside

■ Wet spring followed by hot summer are culprits.

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The extended wet spring of 2005-06 and the dry hot summer that followed has caused a spike in the number of trees in Portola Valley and Woodside afflicted with sudden oak death, a pathogen that is particularly deadly to tan oaks, coast live oaks and black oaks, in that order.

Since January 2006, the San Mateo County Department of Agriculture, based on concerned calls from residents, has identified four new locations of the disease in Portola Valley and six new sites in Woodside, said Gail M. Raabe, the county's commissioner of agriculture.

Marge DeStaebl, of Portola Valley's Conservation Committee, said she's lost three live oaks to the disease since 2005 at her Santa Maria Avenue home. She had her trees analyzed by a private

lab in San Jose.

The committee published a warning about the disease on April 26 on the town's Web site at portolavalley.net. The warning is based on an earlier March 1 statement that was "fleshed out" by committee member Derry Kabcenell, who learned of infected trees on his property near the Windy Hill Open Space preserve, Ms. DeStaebl said.

The combination of moisture followed by warmth is perfect for this pathogen, said Katie Palmieri, the spokeswoman for the California Oak Mortality Task Force, an offshoot of the California Forest Pest Council, a nonprofit educational and advisory group on forest health.

"You get a couple of years of backlash of spore build up" with a wet spring and hot summer, she said. "The more taxing of a summer, the more dramatic the symptoms."

There is no cure, but a certi-

fied arborist can protect healthy trees and those with very early infections, Ms. Palmieri said.

The disease has many native carriers, particularly bay laurel trees, camellias and rhododendrons, she said. It also spreads via wood chips that haven't been sufficiently dried, gardening tools that haven't been sanitized with bleach, wind and surfaces such as shoes, paws, hooves and tires.

Most of the new Portola Valley sites noted by the county are in the upper reaches of Alpine Road. Proximity to open space is the most common factor in the spread of the disease, Ms. Palmieri said. "San Mateo County is not one of those counties where it's totally taken over," she added. ■

■ INFORMATION

For a free biological analysis of a suspected tree, call the San Mateo County Department of Agriculture at 363-4700.

SEC files charges against two locals in Apple options case

The Securities and Exchange Commission last week filed charges against two local residents who are former senior executives of Apple Inc.

Nancy R. Heinen of Portola Valley, the company's former general counsel, is charged with backdating two large stock options grants to senior executives in 2001, including a grant of 7.5 million options to CEO

Steve Jobs.

Ms. Heinen, through an attorney quoted in the Wall Street Journal, denied any fraud, and said her actions were authorized by Apple's board.

Atherton resident Fred D. Anderson, former chief financial officer of Apple, was also charged, but he settled his case, the SEC reported. The commission alleged that Mr.

Anderson should have noticed Ms. Heinen's efforts to backdate stock options grants to Apple's executive team.

Mr. Anderson relied on incorrect information from Apple CEO Steve Jobs, his attorney said in a statement.

In the settlement, Mr. Anderson does not admit or deny the allegations, and agrees to pay about \$3.5 million.

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Community

NEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY



Photos and story by Barbara Wood

Far left: Nicholas Roschkowsky, Brianna Wright and Amanda Aleman model clothes from the Runners High in Menlo Park. **Left, top:** Girls' junior varsity coach Brian Murphy and girls' softball coach Mike King. **Left, center:** Kyra Harris and her brother, Kamal Harris. **Below:** Monica Mora and Steven MacKall show off clothes from Rugby store at Stanford Shopping Center.

In style . . .

Woodside High fashion show raises funds for athletics

With the evening show a sell-out, at least 500 people watched recently as Woodside High School's seniors showed off the latest fashions from local retailers while raising nearly \$15,000 for the school's athletic programs.

Fashion show co-chair Diane Carr said the Athletic Boosters Club pays for buses, uniforms and equipment for school teams, and gives two scholarships to graduating athletes. This year the Boosters purchased 12 medi-

cal satchels for coaches to take to practices and games, and paid for a half-time athletic trainer.

"There is a big concern regarding district cutbacks in buses due to the price of gas," Ms. Carr said. "This will mean an even greater need for funding from the Athletic Boosters Club next year."

"The show was a huge success," she said, "the seniors and parents involved did an outstanding job and had a great time."



Twice yearly Woodside rummage sale involves the whole town

On May 10 and 11, a twice-yearly Woodside institution will once again take place — the rummage sale at the Woodside Village Church.

This time, however, Dolores Degnan, the church volunteer who is in charge of the sale, says the rummage is threatening to burst out of the church's confines because so many donations have been brought in.

Among the treasures that will be available for purchase are a china cabinet, an armoire from the Civil War era, several dining sets, antique chairs, rocking chairs, recliners and leather chairs and sofas, designer purses and cloth-

ing (many with the tags still on), artworks ranging from Hummel figurines to hunt scene prints, jewelry and books.

There is also a skunk trap, a pair of high-heeled black and white sneakers, a hospital bed, a chipper, several filing cabinets, sets of dishes, vintage clothing, gardening supplies, outdoor furniture, a large stained glass window, a large wooden doll house with furniture, and much, much more.

The sale, which Mrs. Degnan says has been a Woodside institution for more than 75 years, takes up nine rooms in the church and two outside courtyards and is staffed by more than 100 volunteers.

A core group of volunteers works at the church weekly year-round sorting and storing the donations.

The sale takes place each May and October. Shoppers line up before dawn on Thursday to get first picks of the goods. The best rummage is found in the "Boutique," where entrance is by ticket only, with a limited number of shoppers allowed for 15 minutes at a time, starting at 9 a.m.

Bargain seekers wait until Friday, when everything is half price. And the serious bargain shoppers wait until 11 a.m. Friday when everything that can fit into a grocery bag goes for \$1 and larger things are usually \$5 or less. At noon,

when the church has to be cleaned up and all the rummage disposed of, all the leftovers are free.

To fuel shoppers, coffee and doughnuts are available Thursday morning, with hamburgers and salads and root beer floats sold for lunch.

Each rummage sale bring in around \$20,000, which is distributed to a group of charities that the church women choose each year, a church mission project, the upkeep of the church and its social hall, and an endowment for an emergency fund that can be used by any community member in need.

The town of Woodside even uses

the recycling accomplished by the rummage sale to help it meet goals for reducing the amount of trash that ends up in the landfill.

The whole town often seems to be involved, whether they're donating castoffs or purchasing treasures. On Thursday afternoon, older students from Woodside Elementary are allowed to attend the sale and buy lunch, and despite warnings against it in the school bulletin, each year students drag back large items ranging from life-sized stuffed animals to television sets and sofas.

For more information, call the Woodside Village Church at 851-1587. ■

Family service organization honors Lawrence Schwab

Lawrence M. (Larry) Schwab of Ladera will be honored Thursday, May 10, at the fourth annual Circle of Support Breakfast, a benefit for Family & Children Services, a nonprofit that helps children and families with problems such as violence and substance abuse.

The event will be held from 8 to 10:30 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Cabana Hotel in Palo Alto. Parenting author Mike Riera will talk about "The Hidden Logic of Children and Teenagers."

A long-time resident of Ladera, Mr. Schwab is a partner at the law firm of Bialson, Bergen & Schwab in Palo Alto.

For more than 20 years, he has been a leader, adviser and mentor for many Midpeninsula nonprofits, says event chair Carrie Drake of Portola Valley.

He serves on the boards of the Children's Health Council, Filoli Center, and the

Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford, and is a former board member of the Los Lomitas Education Foundation and Menlo-Atherton Foundation for Educational Excellence.

Family & Children Services, based in Palo Alto, helps about 8,000 children, teens, and adults each year, says Ms. Drake.

Other Circle of Support committee members who reside in the Almanac's circulation area are: Susan Friedman and Barbara Glynn of Atherton; and Dottie Free, Pat Gregory, Maryanne McGlothlin, and Marianne Palefsky of Menlo Park.

Tickets cost \$70 each. For more information on the event, call 326-6576 or go to www.fcservices.org.



Lawrence Schwab

'Floral Melodies': Mother's Day at Filoli

Song titles will inspire the arrangements, table settings, and garden displays on exhibit at Filoli's through Mother's Day weekend, May 10 through 13.

Over 70 professional designers, horticultural societies, and exhibitors from all parts of the Bay Area will display their work. Outside, garden vignettes will be provided by A. Silvestri, Tom's Outdoor Furniture, and others. Some items on display by these vendors will be available for purchase.

Inside, table settings and bouquets created by Bloomingdale's, Tiffany and Co., Manisse Newell, Draeger's Home, Anthropolgie, and Whole Foods, will adorn different rooms. "I Could Have Danced All Night" will be the theme for the ballroom. The reception room will illustrate "Songs of the Orient."

In the butler's pantry, entries from children, in both the floral bouquet and dried miniature arrangement category, will be exhibited. Roses will monopolize the mansion's kitchen. Free flower chats, workshops, and educational demonstrations will also take place daily.

An opening night reception on Thursday, from 5:30 to 8 p.m., will include cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and live music from pianists, harpists, and vocalists.

Donna and Chuck Higgins will be recognized for their contributions to Filoli at a ceremony in the courtyard scheduled for 7 p.m. Some of the Filoli board members will model Erin MacGeraghty jewelry throughout the evening. The cost of the reception is \$70 for members and \$75 for others.

Friday and Saturday, May 11 and 12, the show continues from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with more musical accompaniment. Tea will be served at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$50 for members and \$55 for non-members, \$30 for children 17 and under, and free for children under 5.

A Mother's Day Champagne Brunch is offered on Sunday, May 13, at 10:30 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m. The cost is \$70 for members, \$75 for non-members, and \$35 for children 17 and under.

Box lunches will be available on Saturday and Sunday at \$20 for adults (meat or vegetarian), \$10 per child (5-17).

Advanced reservations are required for tea, brunch or boxed lunch and the price of the tea and brunch also includes general admission to the flower show.

Call 364-8300, ext. 508, to make reservations or reserve online at www.filoli.org.

Rosener House program: Helping elderly remain at home


A talk on low-cost technology that can help elderly people remain independent at home will be given Wednesday, May 9, at Rosener House, the adult day-care center in

Menlo Park. The speaker is Susan Ayers Walker, managing director of SmartSilvers Alliance.

The program, free and open to the public, will run from 5

to 6:30 p.m.

Tours of Rosener House, located at 500 Arbor Road, will be conducted. For more information, call 322-0126.

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Events & Lectures

"Osteoarthritis: Beyond COX-2 Inhibitors"
Tuesday, May 8, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
David Fischer, M.D., PAMF Rheumatology

Dr. Fischer will discuss the causes and treatments of osteoarthritis, the most common cause of joint problems in adulthood. The focus will be on the risks and benefits of medication, surgery and lifestyle changes.

Hearst Center for Health Education, Level 3, Jamplis Building, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. RSVP to (650) 853-4873.

Classes

"Managing Your High Blood Pressure," Tuesday, May 22, 6 – 8 p.m.
This class provides information on causes, risks and treatment of high blood pressure, and approaches to successful reduction, such as exercise and medication.

"What You Need to Know About Warfarin," Wednesday, May 23, 6 – 8 p.m.
Learn what warfarin is, why you are taking it and how you can help yourself.

"Supermarket Wise," Wednesday, June 6, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Learn techniques for making healthier food choices in a local supermarket with dietitian Karen Ross, M.S., R.D.

"Advance Health Care Directives," call for available dates and times.
PAMF's specially trained volunteers will provide advice and answer questions about the advance health care directive form. No cost.

Support Groups

Cancer (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) • Diabetes (1st Wednesday) • Multiple Sclerosis (2nd & 4th Mondays) • Sleep Apnea (1st Thursday) • Alcohol and Drug Education (Every Tuesday) • Healing Imagery for Cancer Patients (May 9 & 23)

For information on class fees and to register, call the Education Division at (650) 853-2960.

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Gala auction benefits Rebuilding Together

■ AROUND TOWN

One-of-a-kind playhouses and garden structures will be auctioned off at the "Dreams Happen Playhouse Gala and Auction" in the Center Pavilion of the Stanford Shopping Center on Saturday, June 2, at 6:30 p.m.

Proceeds go to Rebuilding Together Peninsula, a nonprofit that mobilizes volunteers to rehabilitate homes and community facilities, benefiting low-income, elderly, and disabled residents.

The life-size children's playhouses and garden structures, on display at the shopping center starting May 5, were made by teams of Bay Area architects, designers and builders.

Dining, catered by a sampling of the center's restaurants, and dancing under the stars to the music of the "Cheeseballs," will accompany the auction. In past fundraisers, bids have ranged from \$6,000 to \$70,000.

Tickets cost \$90 and may be purchased at the guest services desk in the courtyard next to Polo-Ralph Lauren. Absentee ballots will be provided for those who cannot attend the gala. For more information, call Stanford Shopping Center guest services at 617-8591, or Rebuilding Together Peninsula at 336-6597.

Author, theologian talks at Trinity

Author and theologian the Rev. Barbara R. Rossing — who says "rapture" theology is "nuts" and that it's time to say "no" to "left behind" fiction — will speak at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park on Sunday, May 6.

Her topic: "Apocalypse Now: A Word of Hope for a Warring, Warming World." The program begins at 6 p.m. with a reception, followed by the talk and discussion at 6:30 p.m. There is no charge and all are welcome. The church is at 330 Ravenswood Ave.

She is the author of the book, "The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelations."

Her talk is sponsored by the Beatitudes Society, a nonprofit organization founded by the Rev. Frannie Hall-Kieschnick, a priest associate at Holy Trinity, and her husband, Michael Kieschnick. For more information

T.J. Rodgers to give commencement talk

T.J. Rodgers of Woodside, CEO of Cypress Semiconductor Corp., will deliver the commencement address at Menlo College on Saturday, May 5, at 2 p.m.

He founded Cypress Semiconductor in 1982, just seven years after receiving his doctorate

about the talk, call 289-9555.

Message on stroke

"A Life Saving Message About Stroke" will be given at the Menlo Park Library at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 5.

A speaker from the Peninsula Stroke Association will tell how to recognize the signs and symptoms of a stroke and what to do if you or someone you know is experiencing one. The speaker will offer ways to prevent strokes.

The library is at 800 Alma St. Free van service is available for Menlo Park seniors and those with disabilities. For more information, call 330-2512 or e-mail rlroth@menlopark.org.

Mother's Day lunch at Senior Center

Celebrate Mother's Day early at a luncheon hosted by the Menlo Park Senior Center on Thursday, May 10, at noon.

Admission is \$2.50 per person, and the lunch will be held in the Senior Center at 110 Terminal Ave. in the Belle Haven neighborhood. For more information, call Lilian Alfaro at 330-2287.

Cinco de Mayo at history museum

Katrina Donovan will read "Celebrate! Cinco de Mayo!" by Janice Levy on Friday, May 11, from 2 to 3 p.m. at the San Mateo County History Museum, located in the historic 1910 courthouse building at 2200 Broadway in downtown Redwood City.

The Cinco de Mayo holiday celebrates the Mexican people's victory over an invading French army in 1862.

After the reading, children will be invited to make a maraca and tour the exhibit, "Land of Opportunity: The Immigrant Experience in San Mateo County."

The program is free with the cost of admission, which is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children, and free for kids aged 5 and under. For more information, call 299-0104.

in electrical engineering from Stanford University.

"Dr. Rodgers' contributions to the world of business and technology are legendary," said Dr. Timothy Haight, president of the four-year baccalaureate college located in Atherton.

Sports

NEWS OF LOCAL ATHLETES AND TEAM SPORTS

Emma Heath, first girl to hit home run for M-A LL Majors

By Cathy Friedman Duane

Special to the Almanac

In the movie, "A League of Their Own," the great female baseball players of the 1940s were immortalized for playing professional baseball. Emma Heath, 11, from Menlo Park, is proving she, too, is in a league of her own.

On April 17, Emma, who plays for Draeger's of the Menlo-Atherton Little League, hit a home run at Burgess Park. She is the first girl in the league to hit a home run, according to members of the M-A Little League board who researched the archives.

It happened in the sixth inning in a game with Cashin Co. Emma came to the plate as the lead-off hitter against flame-throwing pitcher Andrew Beckman. Emma rocketed the second pitch over 220 feet to dead center field for her first career home run.

The boisterous crowd was awed by her prodigious blast. As Emma rounded the bases,



Emma Heath is a fifth-grader at Encinal School and is also an avid basketball player.

the Draeger's dugout emptied to meet her with backslapping celebration at home plate.

Emma, who plays third base

and pitches for Draeger's, is not the only girl on the team. Emma's good friend Hannah Rubin, who plays catcher and first base, is also a member of the Draeger's squad.

Hannah's strong arm and bat make her and Emma a tough 1-2 combination.

Emma is a fifth-grader at Encinal School and is also an avid basketball player. The good news for Draeger's, and the bad news for the rest of the league, is that Emma will be around for another season when she is 12! ■

About the author: Cathy Friedman Duane of Atherton is the mother of six children, four of whom play in the Menlo-Atherton Little League this year. She has kids playing this year in T-ball, Pitching Machine, Triple A and Majors. Her son, Charlie, plays with Emma; and her husband, Jon Duane, a 10-year veteran coach in the M-A Little League, coaches Emma Heath. The Duane family lives in Atherton. ■



Eighth-grade boys all-stars finished second in the national championships. See names in the story.

Local eighth-graders second in the nation

The Redwood Chapter Eighth Grade All-Stars — made up of eighth-grade boys from Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Woodside, Atherton and Redwood City — recently finished second in the nation at the National All-Stars Tournament Finals in Los Angeles April 13-15.

The boys competed against

more than 100 teams from across the country, and made it to the championship game.

Previously, the team went undefeated in the Silicon Valley Regional Tournament, which consisted of more than 100 All Star teams in the region.

Members of the team (see pic-

ture) are: front row, from left, Johnny Halprin, Michael Lopiparo, Patrick McNamara, Zach Buono and Joey Dinkel; back row, from left, Coach Bob McNamara, Zach Watterson, Cal Baloff, Sam Kelley, Bryan Munks, Tomas O'Donnell, Coach Tim Watterson and Coach Steve Baloff.

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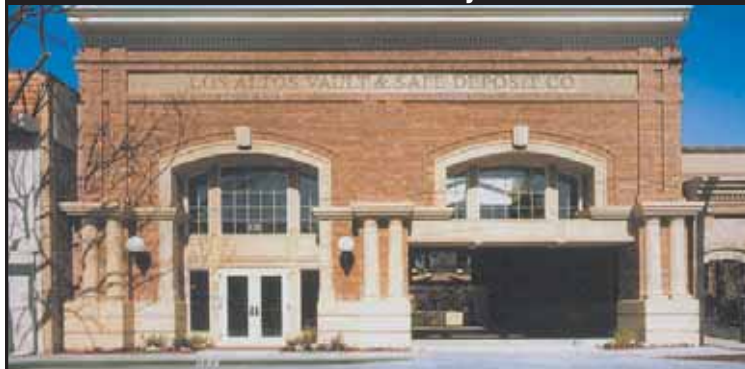
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Schools

NEWS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS.

Local girls win science fair awards

Two local girls brought home awards from the Synopsys Championship Science Fair, held recently in San Jose.

Maya Mathur, a Portola Valley resident, won second place in the biology category and first place in the technical papers category for her project, "Reading between the Nerve Cells to Understand Nerve Injury."

Evie Pless of Atherton won second place in engineering, and special awards from Hewlett-Packard, Varian Medical Systems, Trimble Navigation, and Morgan Lewis for her project, "Sharp Focus: A Variable Focus Lens for Minimally Invasive Ultrasound Surgery."

Both girls attend Castilleja High School. Their performance in the science fair earned a cash award for their school as well as for their school sponsor,



Evie Pless of Atherton, left, and **Maya Mathur** of Portola Valley won science awards at the Synopsys Science Fair.

Doris Mourad, a Castilleja chemistry teacher.

This information was submitted by *Mary Pless of Atherton.*

M-A senior wins \$15,000 scholarship for epidemiological presentation

Mio Frisk, a senior at Menlo-Atherton High School, recently boosted her college fund with a \$15,000 scholarship, awarded for a presentation she gave April 15 at the annual Young Epidemiology Scholars Competition in Washington, D.C., said M-A Principal Denise Plante.

Her presentation dealt with factors that contribute to the absence of menstruation in women and girls of reproduc-

tive age. She answered questions posed in three rounds by judges from the Centers for Disease Control and professors from "major universities," Ms. Plante said.

The contest co-sponsors are the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the College Board.

Ms. Frisk, who has been accepted to the University of California at Berkeley and Stanford University, is particularly

grateful to her statistics teacher, Kirsten Clarke, and her science teacher, Patrick Roisen, Ms. Plante said.

Epidemiology is the detective work of medicine, a scientific investigation into the causes and ways of controlling a disease in a human population. A flu outbreak or a concentration of asthma cases are both candidates for an epidemiological study.

Portola Valley PTO honors 9 volunteers

Nine volunteers in the Portola Valley School District will be honored as recipients of the Portola Valley PTO's honorary Founders' Day awards at a reception on Thursday, May 10.

"Dedicated," "enthusiastic," and "tireless" are words that describe the nine recipients, say PTO co-presidents Marti Sterns and Carolyn Carhart-Quezada.

This year's honorees are: Diana Bergeson, Donna Carano, Kathleen Carr, Teresa Godfrey, Stephanie Harmon, Sandy Lee, Judy Mendelsohn, Ellen Moore and Carol Sontag.

They have served as trustees of the district, led the PTO and school site councils, co-chaired the district's bond measure, headed Portola Valley Schools

Foundation's fundraising activities, and volunteered in classrooms and on field trips.

The reception will be at the home of Lori and Deke Hunter, 5 Cherokee Court in Portola Valley, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Every two years the PTO recognizes outstanding contributors, selected from candidates nominated by community members.

Menlo College names new fundraising director

Catherine E. Reeves, currently senior director of major gifts at California State University, Northridge, has been named vice president for institutional advancement at Menlo College in

Atherton, Timothy Haight, president of Menlo College has announced.

In this position, she will be in charge of major gifts, fundraising, alumni relations, marketing, public rela-

tions and communications.

Menlo College, located at 1000 El Camino Real in Atherton, is a four-year private college that specializes in business management.

OBITUARY

Theresa Wells

Founder of Lytton Gardens and Kara

A memorial will be held Saturday, May 5, at the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto for Dr. Theresa Wells, who lived in Menlo Park for more than 50 years. She died on April 9 at the age of 90.

Born in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, she was one of only three women medical students in her graduating class at the University of Pennsylvania. Her uncle, Ray Lyman Wilbur, was the third president of Stanford; her mother, Theresa Wilbur Paist,

was one of the first women to graduate from Stanford; and her cousin, Blake Wilbur, founded Stanford Medical Center and Hospital, her nephew said.

Dr. Wells lived in Menlo Park for over 50 years, working at Stanford Medical Center as an anesthesiologist.

In 1970, she helped to found Lytton Gardens, the model housing alternative for older adults that provides both retirement and skilled nursing facilities for its members. In 1976, she helped to found Kara, a Palo Alto nonprofit that provides peer support and education to individuals, families, and organizations cop-

ing with death and dying.

An elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, Dr. Wells was active in advocating for human rights, winning the Sertoma Club's "Service to Mankind Award" in 1980.

"Her home was a haven," family members said.

She is survived by her nephew, William Pape of Colorado; six other nieces and nephews; and one goddaughter.

The service is scheduled for 2 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto is located at 1140 Cowper St. in Palo Alto. More information on Kara can be obtained at www.kara-grief.org.

POLICE CALLS

ATHERTON

Accident report: Man alleged to be under the influence of alcohol drove white 1999 Chevrolet Astro van into creek with no injuries, Marsh and Middlefield Roads, April 21.

Theft report: Purse stolen during birthday party, 100 block of Selby Lane, April 22.

Fraud report: Resident received products in mail apparently purchased without authorization from Citibank card, Parkwood Drive, April 26.

Burglary report: Jewelry worth \$300,000 reported missing, 2000 block of Alameda de Las Pulgas, April 26.

Simple assault, battery report: Student assaulted teacher, 100 block of Selby Lane, April 26.

MENLO PARK

Theft report:

Cell phones stolen from students, Hillview School, 1100 Elder Ave., April 20 and 24.

Fraud reports:

Check for \$3,000 cashed by unauthorized person, 700 block of Menlo Avenue, April 20.

Unauthorized use of credit cards, 600 block of Sharon Park Drive, April 24.

Unauthorized use of resident's Social Security number, 1400 block of San Antonio Street, April 26.

Auto burglary reports:

Mazda window smashed, 1000 block of El Camino Real, April 24.

Gold Lexus burglarized, 600 block of Wil-low Road, April 24.

Backpack stolen from car, 200 block of Bay Road, April 25.

Accident report: Car hits pole and driver taken to hospital, 700 block of Hamilton Avenue, April 24.

Residential burglary reports:

Three cameras worth \$1,030 stolen after someone entered house through unlocked bedroom window, 1000 block of Del Norte Avenue, April 20.

Property stolen from home, 300 block of Oakwood Place, April 24.

Residence ransacked, 400 block of Market Place, April 25.

Break-in of outside storage locker attempted, 2000 block of Sand Hill Road, April 26.

Financial documents stolen, 1000 block of Tehama Avenue, April 26.

LETTERS

continued from page 23

world, including California, is there a law or regulation that bans emissions of CO₂. In fact, emitting CO₂ is the everyday story of life. The average human exhales about 2.2 pounds of CO₂ every day. If you add up all of mankind's CO₂-producing activities, all our combustion, brewing, baking, Weber kettles, weed whackers and Mosquito Magnets, we generate only about 1/30th of Mother Nature's output.

She invented the compost pile; decay is her big thing. When living organisms die and decompose, they give off CO₂. It's hard to imag-

ine a compound more natural than CO₂. Animals breathe it out, plants breathe it in. No one leaves home without it. Also, let's not confuse CO₂ with pollution. California has been at the forefront of legally regulating pollution from car exhaust and CO₂ is not even mentioned. It's NOT a pollutant. So, why all the phony fuss about CO₂?

The "global warming" controversy is powered by three mighty engines: First, the traditional liberal hatred of American corporations. Second, the media's love of wildly over-hyping any potentially negative idea. Remember the "global cooling" scare in the 1970s? And third, as you might expect, money.

The United States paid billions of dollars to "scientists" last year, mostly in universities where they're motivated to play ball in order to collect huge grants, to study global warming. What's under-reported is that more than 17,000 scientists have declared that human civilization is less to blame for normal, cyclical temperature variations over the centuries than are natural phenomena. It's not our fault and there's nothing we can do about it anyway.

It's time to take two aspirin, lie down and consider the matter calmly.

Diane Braun
Woodland Avenue
Menlo Park

ROBOT

continued from page 13

Raising money

At Woodside/Carlmont, the team's cash flow for this year may reach \$34,500, said team adviser and science teacher Arlene Kolber. The total includes \$5,000 raised in the spring of 2006 and used as seed money last fall, \$5,000 from the Woodside High School Foundation, and \$1,500 from SRI International in Menlo Park.

DreamWorks Animation SKG, based in Glendale and Redwood City, contributed \$15,000 and will be reimbursing team travel expenses up to \$8,000, says company spokesman Hans Ku.

"We didn't want the financial part to get in their way," Mr. Ku says. Asked about an animation studio's relevance to ro-

botics, Mr. Ku replied: "There is almost a one to one analogy between inventing a robot and inventing on the screen."

Software simulates the robot acting autonomously and ties everything together, he says. Mentors like DreamWorks engineer Drew Perttula of the Redwood City office helped the

Woodside/Carlmont team take concept to reality.

"To be a leader in our field, we rely on creative problem solving using a good helping of math and science, imagination and innovation," he added in an e-mail. "Dreaming up a functioning robot that will solve a challenging problem in six weeks is quite similar." ■

Plea deal for MP antiques dealer

An 88-year-old Menlo Park antique store owner accused of molesting a 14-year-old customer in July could receive up to one year in county jail, according to the San Mateo County district attorney's office.

Bela Joseph Demeter, the owner of Demeter Antiques Ltd., agreed April 27 to plead no contest

to one count of lewd acts on a minor in return for an agreement to avoid state prison, the district attorney's office reported.

Prosecutors alleged that on July 11, Mr. Demeter cornered the girl in his store, and then kissed and groped her. Sentencing is set for June 27.

— Bay City News Service

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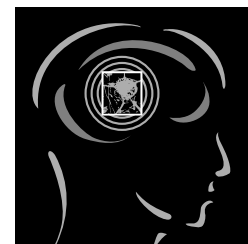
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Sheriff should answer questions

Was the San Mateo County sheriff trolling for a prostitute, or was he looking for a legitimate massage when he was detained by the Las Vegas police late last month during a sweep of brothels in the city?

That is just one of many questions Sheriff Greg Munks should answer about what could be a very large misread of an innocent effort to recover from running in an annual competition among sheriff departments from all over the state. Unfortunately for Sheriff Munks, when a law enforcement officer is caught up in anything that smacks of willful misbehavior, the questions will just keep coming.

To be fair, the sheriff was not charged with a crime, but neither were the others who were roused out of the nondescript Las Vegas residence two miles from the famous downtown strip. His story: He and Undersheriff Carlos Bolanos had hired a limousine and directed the driver to find them a massage. They had no idea that the massage parlor was a house of ill repute.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

Maybe it was an innocent request, but with all due respect, the idea that two law enforcement officers, on leave in Las Vegas, are in a limo and out looking for a massage simply doesn't ring true.

Other than issuing a brief statement when he returned to his office, Sheriff Munks has steadfastly refused to answer any questions about the incident, and continues to do so. Apparently, he and his family believe that any further comment will simply keep the story alive.

We disagree. As a high-ranking elected public official, the sheriff owes his constituents a full explanation of his behavior in Las Vegas. By refusing, he simply gives credence to those who believe the worst and don't buy his story about being sore from running in the relay event.

By truthfully answering any and all questions, the sheriff will at least be able to say he finally handled this sorry episode with honor. His continued silence will only make it look worse.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Renovated Folger will be more than a stable

Editor:

Thank you to Trish Hooper for her guest opinion that appeared in last week's Almanac. I echo her support for the renovation of the historic Folger estate stable.

We should also remember that the renovated stable will be "much more than a stable." It will be an outdoor classroom for generations of children and provide a living-history glimpse into the past, and an understanding of life on the peninsula during the transition from horse and carriage to horseless carriage.

Field trips will be developed by the San Mateo County Historical Association and will be augmented by other children's programming, architecture, history tours, and special events. Self-guided walking tours of the historic district are available now. (The horses request that visitors not approach or feed them. Thank you.)

Sonja Davidow, Folger Stable Committee, Woodside

A stretch to save Woodcutter's cottage

Editor:

The article in last week's Almanac about the Chilean woodcutter's cottage is comprehensive and informative.

However, the proposal to preserve it as a reminder of the 19th century's racism and prejudice toward Chileans is a bit of a stretch when you consider there were many positive relations with Chileans at the time.



Atherton Heritage Association

Our Regional Heritage

Following the 1906 earthquake, the Stern brothers — Abraham, Louis, Jacob and Sigmund — bought property in Atherton on Selby Lane and along Atherton Avenue. Abraham Stern's home, shown in this 1976 photograph, was known as "Oakmeadows," and is still being used as a private residence today.

Faxon Atherton of local fame went to Chile about 1840 to seek his fortune, which he did in a big way and married Senorita Dominga De Goni, a member of one of the patrician old families of Chile. They built homes in Menlo Park and San Francisco and had seven children.

Now we are setting out to build a notable, architecturally designed Town Center and some residents propose to designate this decrepit eyesore as a historic relic and move it or a copy of it,

to a site adjacent to our gracious Old Schoolhouse. Consider that the cottage is not original and even has inside plumbing.

In my opinion the cottage should be demolished and memorialized with a bronze plaque as has been done with several more notable structures in town. Above all, if the cottage does become a "historic monument" please don't turn it into a toilet, as some have suggested.

Bernie Bayuk
Paloma Road, Portola Valley

Conservation tip: Stop population growth

Editor:

Yes, Charles Marsala is right. It is "time to get off the CO2 habit," as he expressed in last week's guest opinion.

We each express "conservation" in different ways. Even with "Earth Day" though, there still is one area of "conservation" and acting responsibly to the environment that receives little attention: overpopulation. Mr. Marsala stated,

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Continued from previous page

“The earth’s population has grown from 1.8 billion in 1900 to 6.5 billion today.” What uses natural resources? What pollutes? People!

Excessive reproduction is as harmful to our planet as excessive consumption. Even with wars, famine, disease and disasters the population continues to explode. It doesn’t have to. There are as many ways to express the qualities of “motherhood” and “fatherhood” without having children, as there are children who are in need of these qualities.

Couples world-wide could consider having one child — two at most — then opening their arms to those who are starving for attention and love. It is just as important to address this issue for a healthy planet as it is to address those that are continually being addressed.

Jackie Leonard-Dimmick
Walnut Avenue, Atherton

Another view on CO2 and global warming

Editor:

Last week’s guest opinion from Charles Marsala contains some astonishing inaccuracies and digressions and begs for a sensible rebuttal.

First of all, CO2 is **not** harmful to our planet. Nowhere in the

See **LETTERS**, page 21

A chance to save a Portola Valley icon

By Nancy Lund

Imagine driving down Portola Road in Portola Valley today and seeing TWO historic schoolhouses, side by side. That could be the case, had the residents of 1950 made an effort to preserve the 1894 schoolhouse.

Fortunately for us, by 1955 the citizens realized their mistake in losing that first school and refused to allow the demolition of the surviving one.

Think about driving down Alpine Road and not seeing the Alpine Inn, affectionately known as “Zots” to generations. When folks grumbled about its rundown appearance in the 1960s, it was a tough job for town historian Dorothy Regnery to convince historic registries that it deserved official historic designation and thereby should be saved from demolition.

A historic preservation issue now faces us as citizens of the new century: the Chilean Woodchopper’s House on the Old Jelich Ranch. It’s that little white house in a sadly decrepit state that stands close by Portola Road. The new owners have offered to donate it to the town if the town removes it from the property.

The house is the oldest in

town, one of only two buildings with sesquicentennial credentials. Few people know the tragic story of the Chileans who were driven from the gold fields by extreme prejudice and somehow found sanctuary on the rancho of Maximo Martinez. Until ships abandoned in the bay by gold-seeking crews could deliver them to their homeland, they chopped willows for the San Francisco charcoal market and occupied five or six humble huts situated around the valley floor. This one alone survives.

Current plans are to remove the historic siding, raze the house, build a replica near the historic schoolhouse, use the removed cladding as exterior finish on three sides, and have the new structure serve as a restroom facility for the new Town Center. While this is a reasonable plan, and is better than demolition, it is a far cry from what can, and should, be accomplished through an effective public-private partnership. With such a partnership, preservation and restoration can be possible.

In the midst of our busy lives in 2007, maintaining a quiet, rural atmosphere is one of Portola Valley’s core values, yet one by



Portola Valley Archives

Woody Woodward took this photo of the Chilean Woodchoppers’ House in 1986. One of several similar dwellings in Portola Valley in the 1850s, it was moved to its current location on Portola Road in 1915 by the Jelich family. Until the 1990s, workers on the Jelich Ranch occupied it.

one, precious pieces of our heritage have disappeared. If funding appears and a site is found to preserve *in toto* this remnant of a simpler era, how could we use the building? A local museum? An interpretive center for Windy Hill? A teen center? A meeting place? A post office? Or, consistent with its historic role, housing for a ranch hand or caretaker for the new Town Center?

Can we preserve the small vestiges of our past that survive so that future stewards of this beautiful valley will have

a window into days gone by? Photographs and markers are poor substitutes for reality.

To help preserve important parts of our town’s history, including the Chilean Woodchopper’s House currently in jeopardy, please contact the Preserve Portola Valley History Committee at: SavePVHistory@gmail.com, 851-7519, or 851-8069. ■

Nancy Lund is the town historian for Portola Valley and wrote this guest opinion for the Almanac.

Every parent’s worst nightmare

By Gordon Lewin

The message was waiting when I walked in the door. It was not about my son. It was from my son. It was about his best friend from childhood. It was not at Virginia Tech. It was at MIT.

There was no violence, no evil. A boating accident. A well-prepared former Eagle Scout had been found strapped to what remained of his inflatable and a tied-up bailing bucket. Precautions ... but not sufficient for the unusually cold water this spring.

I once lived in Boston. Calm waters can quickly become treacherous. Massachusetts was, after all, the real life setting for “The Perfect Storm.”

Who am I to judge someone else’s judgment? We all make miscalculations. Most of the time we are lucky. We slam on the brakes and then take a deep breath.

I think back to last summer, at a remote beach in Hawaii, where I got caught in an undertow. The surf had changed during a 30-minute swim. A stranger spotted me and helped me out. I sat on the beach, out of breath and a bit battered. My ego shattered. There had been a surf warning, but it was calm when I went in. Bad judgment at age 54.

Trying to make sense of a tragedy does not lead to a good night’s sleep. The next

day, the phone rings. The parents are flying home. A relative asks if we could prepare a dinner, and be there for them if an empty house is too much to bear.

We rush to the grocery store for ingredients. My wife cooks up a homemade chicken soup.

It was the same dish prepared for us a decade earlier by the boy’s mother after we were in a car accident.

At the boy’s home, there are hugs and tears and other friends. Yes, please stay. And so we do, setting the table for dinner for a couple who had been planning to attend a college graduation but instead brought home a son’s personal belongings.

The family seeks privacy. No press calls, please. Yet they are grateful to the Boston media for its alerts and to the Coast Guard and the local police for their efforts.

The father describes what it was like having to identify a son at a funeral home. I listen. I feel pain running up my neck to my head. I hold it in. I nod, trying not to make things worse. I finally understand emotionally the Chinese saying that “tragedy is not when a child buries a parent, but when a parent buries a child.”

We head home. My wife reminds me of a memento in our garage. It was a joint project the boys had completed in fifth grade. They



EDITOR’S NOTE

Gordon Lewin writes about his learning, on the same week as the Virginia Tech massacre, news of the death of Daniel Barclay, 22, of Menlo Park, an MIT student and former ace Quiz Kid at M-A High, who was found drowned in Massachusetts April 20. Mr. Lewin is a friend of the family and serves on the school board of the Sequoia Union High School District.

had argued over who would keep it. I suggested they toss a coin and take turns. They ask for how long? I quip, the winner will give it to the loser at his wedding. They laugh. My son wins. Now, there will be no wedding.

Three weeks ago, we visited our son in Washington, D.C. We drove to Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. We walked around the historic village, listening to guides describe life at the time of the American Revolution. In some ways, it was so simple ... no computers, no cars, no phones. There was also no medicine, as we know it. Mothers routinely died in childbirth. Most families would have lost a least one child to illness. These losses were a more expected part of what life provided.

Across the street from Colonial Williamsburg, we walked around the tranquil campus of the College of William and Mary, which has been educating students for hundreds of years. Today, this college, along with every

college in America, will be reviewing procedures and plans to try and prevent another Virginia Tech from happening.

No wonder so many parents are anxious today about all sorts of things. Our expectations about what life can bring are so high, perhaps unrealistically high. At the same time, we see events — terrible events, random events — leaving us with so little feeling of control.

Loving parents worry about their children. Yet, we all know that too much worry is not a good thing. So we figure that somehow, if we worry just the right amount, do the right thing, develop the right plans, prep for getting into the right college, that somehow our children will grow up and live happily ever after.

We know our parents always wanted the best for us, as we do for our children. But we also know our lives have been mixed with joy and loss. If we look to our former high school classmates, we know there are stories of lives sorting out differently and at times tragically. Somehow, we think it will be different for our children. And perhaps, to retain sanity, we must live with the illusion that it can never happen to us. So at a subconscious level, we fret about the little things because we have no control over the things that really count.

While walking around Williamsburg, my son reminisced about his childhood. I asked him what we had done right raising him. As a teenager, he had certainly let us know what we had done wrong.

After some silence, he commented, “You were always there for me.”

Maybe that’s all we can ever do. ■



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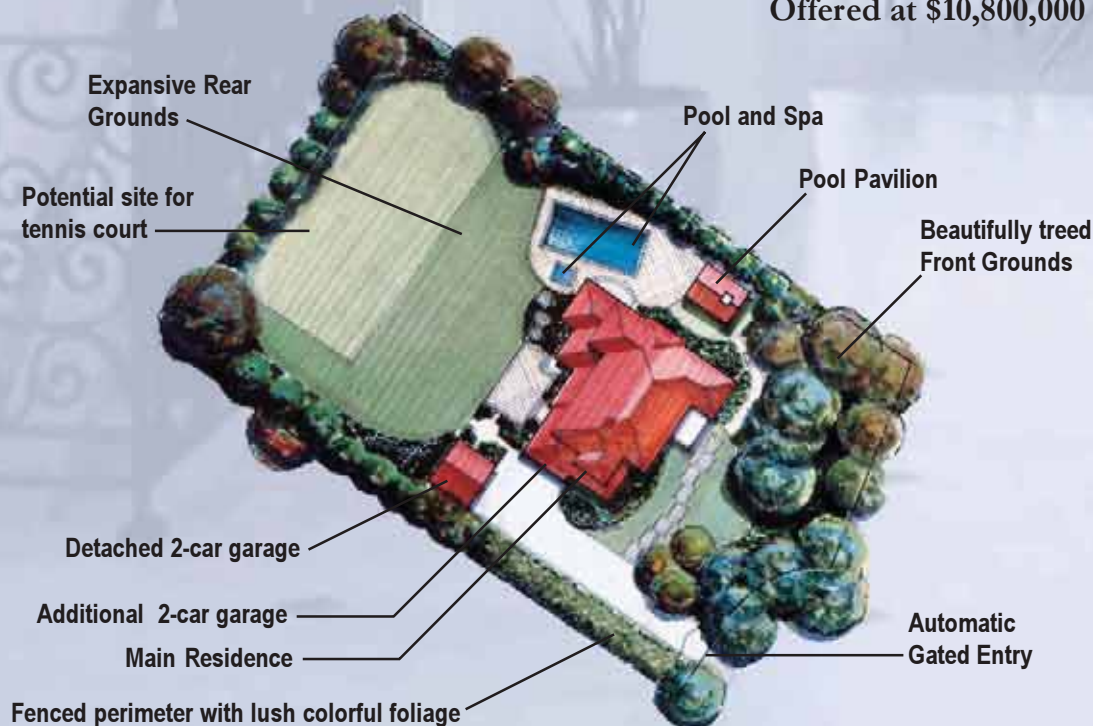
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